

In July 2007, when my longtime chief of staff announced his intention to retire, Wally agreed to come out of retirement to serve as interim chief of staff during the transition period. Wally was no stranger to my office. Following a long career working for the National Rural Electric Cooperatives, he served as my state liaison for 6 years. In fact, Wally and I have a history of working together that spans back over 40 years when I was an intern in the office of Congressman Rolland Redlin and he was serving as the young chief of staff for the Congressman. Wally and I have been working together in one form or another ever since.

Wally came on board as my interim chief of staff and immediately provided the steady leadership that is crucial during times of change. During his tenure in my office, Wally has done an outstanding job of seeing my staff through personnel changes and legislative challenges, and has provided me the steady advice of a seasoned veteran. His work has been outstanding.

Finally, and most importantly, Wally Rustad is an outstanding person. He has never forgotten the small-town values he learned growing up Grenora, ND. He has worked quietly and tirelessly behind the scenes to make things happen and was always happy to divert credit to others. He has been tremendously loyal, dedicated, and a passionate advocate for the people of my State. He has never forgotten that he is working for the American taxpayer. And he has been a good friend and a mentor to others on staff.

With extraordinary gratitude for his time serving as my chief of staff, I wish Wally well as he returns home to his lovely wife Marlys. I have been blessed to have Wally as a trusted advisor and confidante but most importantly he has been a great friend. I wish him all the best as he returns to retirement and look forward to continuing our association for many years to come.

CONSTITUENT VIEWS

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter from Mr. Richard Morgan from Shavertown, PA, be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DECEMBER 7, 2007.

Re: Congressional members

Hon. ARLEN SPECTER,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR SPECTER: My name is Richard H. Morgan. I reside at 145 Woodbine Road, Shavertown, PA. I am retired at 72 years of age and a military veteran of the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard. I have been a Republican since 21 years of age.

On November 20, 2007 at 11 a.m., you returned my phone call. During our conversation I agreed to write a letter stating my views of the job the Senate has done. You agreed to read this letter on the Senate

floor. I told you I would really like to stand and talk in front of the Senate.

I am part of the great generation of people who lived, worked, and died for this country. I often wonder to myself where we as a society let our country go so wrong. We are not safe in our own country. I am not afraid of terrorists from other countries; I have greater fear from my own government. I would like to list a few examples.

First, congressional personnel do not live their lives as the working average middle class nor our lower class society. They think of us as uneducated. They may be right since we placed our trust in their hands and believed they would do the job right. I question too what has happened to the oath of office they took as a serious promise to us and God. The majority of Congress lacks integrity and humility. They are definitely not role models for our society. I know our country's business can be conducted better. I have no special interest groups to benefit by my vote.

Second, I have a problem concerning social security and how the word entitlements is used. It makes me feel like they are giving me personally a handout. The social security trust fund is completely funded by the citizens of the United States through payroll tax deductions and collected by the Internal Revenue Service. I must add that they are elected by citizens to manage these funds for us and not to fund other programs. So, I feel the word of entitlements should have reference to congressional perks, which are completely funded by tax paying citizens.

Finally, my third area of concern is the marriage of congressional members and corporate business. I am not sure if it's illegal, but I do know it's unethical. This has caused so much damage to my country. I have done the research on many programs such as the Bureau of Public Debt, Federal Accounting, and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

The answer to this whole problem is for all elected congressional members to gain a conscience or to resign from office.

Respectively,

RICHARD H. MORGAN.

RESTORING JUSTICE FOR BOOKER TOWNSELL

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, today I want to take a moment to recognize a victory for the cause of justice, albeit one that is long overdue. In 1944, Booker Townsell, a private in the U.S. Army, was convicted of a crime in an unfair and racially biased trial, 63 years ago to this day. I join Booker Townsell's family in heralding the recent decision by the Army Board for Correction of Military Records to overturn this conviction and restore all rights lost as a result of the conviction. Although Booker Townsell is no longer with us, and no ruling can change the injustice that Booker Townsell suffered when he was wrongly convicted by the Army in 1944, I am pleased to see that the Army is rejecting the original decision handed down 63 years ago.

Despite the injustice he suffered, Booker Townsell displayed tremendous strength, and went on to lead a full life in Wisconsin, including raising a wonderful family. I am glad to see the tremendous weight of this conviction lifted from his family. It is due to their

valiant effort that this decision was finally overturned. I also thank Congressmen JIM McDERMOTT and DUNCAN HUNTER for putting vital pressure on the Army to review the 1944 decision. While it has taken far too long, 63 years later, justice has finally been restored to Booker Townsell and his family.

HONORING DENIS O'DONOVAN

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following resolution from the HELP Committee to be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows.

Resolution commending Denis O'Donovan with deepest sincerity for his dedicated and skillful work to improve the health and well-being of the American people.

Whereas Denis O'Donovan has served with distinction and skill for 10 years as Chief Clerk of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions of the Senate;

Whereas Denis O'Donovan exemplifies the best traditions of selfless public service, having devoted 40 years to improving the lives of all Americans through service to the Senate;

Whereas Denis O'Donovan has met every Member of the Committee and their staffs with cheerfulness and consideration;

Whereas the faultless competence of Denis O'Donovan has enabled the Committee to function effectively under Chairmen of both parties;

Whereas Denis O'Donovan will begin a well-earned retirement next month; and

Whereas Denis O'Donovan may be gone as of this date, but he will never be forgotten by those who had the fortune to work with him: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions of the Senate—

(1) commends Denis O'Donovan with deepest sincerity for his dedicated and skillful work to improve the health and well-being of the American people; and

(2) wishes Denis O'Donovan all happiness and fulfillment in retirement.

RETIREMENT OF PATRICIA KNIGHT

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I rise to acknowledge the retirement from the Senate of a person of great skill and accomplishment, Patricia Knight. She will be greatly missed.

Trish has devoted more than a quarter century of her life to public service, the last nine years as chief of staff to my good friend and colleague, Senator ORRIN HATCH. Her leadership on so many issues over that time has improved the lives of millions of Americans in so many ways.

Over the years, Trish has brought her skills and energy to bear on a range of important issues from energy policy to foreign policy and so much more. She served in the Reagan administration and the first Bush administration as a key adviser on health legislation. She has been an aide on the Appropriations Committee covering bills as vast as funding for the Commerce Department and our foreign aid programs.

In no area has her able hand been more evident than health care. Before her appointment as chief of staff, Trish served as chief health adviser to Senator HATCH. In that capacity, she was his lead staffer in the creation of the Children's Health Insurance Program which today provides health coverage to more than 6 million poor children. She was a leader, too, in improving the work of the Food and Drug Administration in enhancing the safety and efficacy of prescription drugs and food. The Public Health Service is a stronger agency because of Trish's able work.

Most of all, she has been a trusted adviser and friend to so many of us. It was always clear where Trish stood on a question, and she always had clear reasons for her views. Everyone who worked with her respected her for her wisdom, judgment and determination to succeed. Her subtle humor and great spirit got us through many very difficult negotiations.

Trish, we love you and we will miss you and wish you well in the next adventure.

TRIBUTE TO RETA LAFORD

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I am proud to announce the recent appointment of my legislative fellow for 2007, Ms. Reta LaFord, to the position of Deputy Forest Supervisor on the Coronado National Forest in New Mexico and Arizona. Reta has been invaluable in my office throughout this past year, specializing in Native-American and natural-resource issues. Her 20 years of experience working for the Forest Service in Montana and other parts of the West provided me with greater expertise related to how the Federal Government can successfully work with the tribes and other stakeholder groups on critical land management issues. She has particular sensitivity to the cultural concerns of the tribes in the West, and the USDA Forest Service will indeed gain from her knowledge and understanding as the Federal Government works with tribal governments in the Coronado National Forest to resolve important resource management challenges. Reta's diligence and thoroughness for the projects she manages will bring her tremendous success in this next chapter of her career.

I wish her the very best and thank her for her devoted service to the great state of Idaho during 2007. She will be missed in my office.

THE EAGLES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have had the privilege of attending performances by the Eagles, and I have enjoyed a long friendship with Don Henley and the members of the band.

I talked with Don recently about their new double-disc set "Long Road Out of Eden" and how they came about making it. We also talked about the last impromptu performance of the Eagles I attended, which was at Camp

David at a farewell party for President Bill Clinton, who was leaving office within 48 hours. As always, they were superb.

I have listened so many times to their music while traveling, at my home in Vermont, and in my office, and I thought my colleagues may benefit from the transcript of an interview Don Henley recently had with CNN. I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE (CNN).—It may have been 28 years since the last Eagles studio album—yes, "The Long Run" came out in 1979—but, in terms of sales, it's as if the famed band has never left.

The group's new CD, the double-disc set "Long Road Out of Eden," debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard album charts with more than 700,000 copies sold in its first week. This—despite its being available only at Wal-Mart.

That relationship with America's biggest merchant has also raised eyebrows. Wal-Mart's reputation does not seem to dovetail with the interests of the Eagles, particularly the band's Don Henley, an outspoken environmentalist.

In a rare interview, Henley addressed those concerns, along with the idea of patriotism, the changing music business, and why "Long Road" may be the group's last album.

CNN's Denise Quan spoke to Henley at the Country Music Association awards last week, and said that Henley was a "true Southern gentleman," ending the interview by sending the crew on its way with plates of mashed potatoes, corn and biscuits.

CNN. Don Henley, congratulations on the first-week sales of this album. I think it exceeded everyone's expectations.

HENLEY. More than 700,000 in this country. And I'm told it has sold 3 million worldwide. So we're delighted.

CNN. Somewhere, Kanye West is quaking in his boots, I would imagine.

HENLEY. I doubt it. (Laughs)

CNN. You made us wait 28 years for this new CD.

HENLEY. Yeah. Well, we don't like to rush into things.

CNN. I was surprised when it was announced you had gone with a Wal-Mart deal exclusively. Why did you do that?

HENLEY. Our deal with the major label expired several years ago, and we just decided we wanted to try something new. . . . Everybody's been calling for a new paradigm in the record industry. Some people have gone to the Internet and haven't had a lot of success with that.

Some people have decided to go with the indie labels, who are mostly distributed by the major labels. Some people have signed with major coffee companies with varying degrees of success.

So Wal-Mart came to us, and they made us a really good offer. And they told us about their green initiative, and how they're trying to make their company more ecologically responsible. And we were impressed by their programs in that regard, and what they're trying to do. And a lot of our fans are customers of Wal-Mart, so we thought it was a good fit.

CNN. There are two discs in "Long Road Out of Eden." One disc is full of romantic ballads with those harmonies the Eagles are known for, and the other disc is full of satirical, witty, kind of biting—

HENLEY. (Interrupts) Thank you. Thank you for not using the word "cynical." (Laugh) Which has become a real cliché.

Protest songs are an old tradition that seems to be coming back now. People writing about government has been going on since the Middle Ages. . . . But to hear some journalists tell it, this is like it's never been done before, and it's outrageous!

If people don't agree with us, they can hit the skip button. We are ticked off about some things, but we also do some of it with humor. People seem to miss our humor. A lot. It seems to go (brushes side of his head with his hand).

CNN. The Eagles have long been associated with the country sound—only you brought the rock element to it when you first appeared on the scene.

HENLEY. Yeah, yeah.

CNN. But your politics are different than a lot of people in Nashville, who are more conservative than I would say you are.

HENLEY. Yeah. Well, Nashville is changing. Nashville is not nearly as conservative as it used to be.

CNN. People just don't talk about it, perhaps.

HENLEY. It's just like you don't talk about religion and politics. This country was founded on rebellion. We believe that we are patriotic. We believe that everyone has the right to speak out. In fact, we believe that it's unpatriotic not to speak out.

Lord knows, we've been criticized enough during our career. When we were younger, (adopts Bugs Bunny voice) it hurt our widdle feelings. But now we have no feelings! We had them removed. Surgically. This is probably the last Eagles album that we'll ever make. So we decided to just say whatever we felt like saying. And let the chips fall where they may.

CNN. But doesn't the success of this album spur you to make more music? Obviously, people want to hear it.

HENLEY. I can't sit here and tell you for certain that there will never be another Eagles album, but we got 20 songs on this album. You know, we got a lot of things off our chest, so to speak.

I don't know if everybody's going to want to do another one. If we do a world tour, that'll take at least two years. We're all pushing 60. Well, some of us are 60. . . .

Anyway, we'll see. But we all have some solo plans still. I still have a contract with a major label for a couple of solo albums. I think parenting is one of the highest things on our agenda right now. We all have young children. So making another album is not our first priority right now.

CNN. It seems like you've mellowed quite a bit. Is it fatherhood that's changed you, or perhaps just turning 60?

HENLEY. I think we've all mellowed in this group. I think having children was really good for all of us. And you supposedly get mellow with age. However, as some of the songs will indicate, we're not too mellow. (Pauses)

CNN. What are you thinking?

HENLEY. I hate that word "mellow," actually. We've been saddled with that word since the very beginning of our career, you know. It has something to do with Southern California. I wish they would find a new word. We're either "mellow" or we're "cynical." They can't make up their minds. It's sort of a contradiction.

CNN. But I think you've been sort of a contradiction. Certainly an enigma to a lot of people.

HENLEY. Well, good! (Laughs) Yeah, well, this band is a contradiction. This album is. But life is a contradiction, isn't it? There are good things, and there are bad things going on in the world simultaneously. There's love and hate. There's war and peace. There are all kinds of things happening at the same time. And so that's reflected on this album, I think.